THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER,

AND

WEST OF ENGLAND

Miscellany:

FROM

MONDAY, JULY 1, to MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1822.

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[No 1.] MONDAY, JULY 1, 1822. [Vol. VI.—N.S.]

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL.

The appearance of the Scotch or Scott's Novels, as they are indifferently called, constitute epochs in the literary (we might perhaps say in all the) world; and we are among those who sincerely rejoice that these epochs are short, and not,

Like angel visits, few and far between.

The Fortunes of Nigel are worthy of the Author of Waverley. A charming introduction, precedes the words in which Captain Clutterbuck details a conversation he has had with the Eidolon, or Representative Vision of the Author of Waverley. It is admirably good-humoured, and in noticing the faults charged upon the author and refuting them, affords a lesson to every Reviewer in Britain.

On the subject of the so strictly preserved incognito, the pleasant author says,—

"You may remember, the neatly-wrought chain of circumstantial evidence, so artificially brought forward to prove Sir Philip Francis's title to the Letters of Junius, seemed at first irrefragable; yet the influence of the reasoning has passed away, and Junius, in the general opinion, is as much unknown as ever. But on this subject I will not be soothed or provoked into saying one word more. To say who I am not, would be one step towards saying who I am; and as I desire not, any more than a certain justice of peace mentioned by Shenstone, the noise or report such things make in the world, I shall continue to be silent on a subject, which, in my opinion, is very undeserving the rout that has been made about it."

Nigel Olifaunt, Lord of Glenvarloch, the hero of the piece, is introduced to the readers through a broil into which his serving man Richard, or Richie Moniplies, falls with the 'prentices of Fleet-street—a class curiously described. Richie is rescued by two of these worthies, Jenkin Vincent, or Jin Vin, and Frank Tunstall, apprentices to Davy Ramsay, a Scotch chronometer-maker, and horologer to the king. Ramsay is devoted to abstruse calculations; but has, nevertheless, a very pretty daughter, with an independent fortune of two hundred pounds a-year, the heroine of our story. When Moniplies is carried with his broken head into the house of the horologer, one Master George accidentally comes in, and directing the cure of the wounded man, learns who he is and where his master abides, viz. at a mean lodging in John Christie's, a shipchandler in Paul's Wharf, with a buxom wife twenty years younger than himself. This Master George is Heriot, a very rich and worshipful personage, the king's jeweller, and a favourite, with all the influence of wealth at the court to which poor Nigel has rather a hopeless suit, his inheritance being nearly forfeited, and the debt due by the crown since the Raid of Ruthven to his noble father, very unlikely to be obtained for its redemption.

The benevolent and spirited goldsmith resolves to try what can be done at Whitehall, and, having won his way with Lord Nigel, the following extract will elucidate both the author and their progress:—

"The goldsmith to the Royal Household, and who, if fame spoke true, oftentimes acted as their banker, (for these professions were not as yet separated from each other,) was a person of too much importance to receive the slightest interruption from sentinel or porter; and having his mule and two of his followers in the outer court, he gently knocked at a postern-gate of the building, and was present-

ly admitted, while the most trusty of his attendants followed him closely with the piece of plate under his arm. This man also he left behind him in an anti-room, where three or four pages in the royal livery, but untrussed, unbuttoned, and dressed more carelessly than the place and nearness to a King's person seemed to admit, were playing at dice and draughts, or stretched upon benches, and slumbering with half-shut eyes. A corresponding gallery, which opened from the anti-room, was occupied by two gentlemen-ushers of the chamber, who gave each a smile of recognition as the wealthy goldsmith entered. No word was spoken on either side, but one of the ushers looked first to Heriot, and then to a little door half-covered by the tapestry, which seemed to say as plain as a look could—'Lies your business that way?' The citizen nodded, and the court-attendant, moving on tiptoe and with as much caution as if the floor had been paved with eggs, advanced to the door, opened it gently, and spoke a few words in a low tone. The broad Scottish accent of King James was heard in reply—'Admit him instanter, Maxwell. Have ye hairboured sae lang at the court, and not learned that gold and silver is ever welcome?'

"The usher signed to Heriot to advance, and the honest citizen was presently introduced into the cabinet of the Sovereign.

"The scene of confusion amid which he found the King seated, was no bad picture of the state and quality of James's own mind. There was much that was rich and costly in cabinet pictures and valuable ornaments, but they were slovenly arranged, covered with dust, and lost half their value, or at least their effect, from the manner in which they were presented to the eye. The table was loaded with huge folios, amongst which lay light books of jest and ribaldry; and amongst notes of unmercifully long orations, and essays on king-craft, they mingled miserable roundels and ballads by the royal 'Prentice as he styled himself, in the art of poetry, and schemes for the general pacification of Europe, with a list of the names of the King's hounds, and remedies against canine madness.

"The King's dress was of green velvet, quilted so full as to be dagger-proof, which gave him the appearance of clumsy and ungainly protuberance; while its being buttoned awry communicated to his figure an air of distortion. Over his green doublet he wore a sad-coloured night gown, out of the pocket of which peeped his hunting horn. His high-crowned grey hat lay on the floor, covered with dust, but encircled by a carkanet of large ballas rubies; and he wore a blue velvet night-cap, in the front of which was placed the plume of a heron, which had been struck down by a favourite hawk in some critical moment of the flight, in remembrance of which the King wore this highly honoured feather.

"But such inconsistencies in dress and appointments were mere outward types of those which existed in the royal character, rendering it a subject of doubt amongst his contemporaries, and bequeathing it as a problem to future historians. He was deeply learned, without possessing useful knowledge; sagacious in many individual cases, without having real wisdom; fond of his power and desirous to maintain and augment it, yet willing to resign the direction of that, and of himself, to the most unworthy favourites; a big and bold assertor of his rights in words, yet one who tamely saw them trampled on in deeds; a lover of negociations, in which he was always outwitted, and a fearer of war, where conquests might have been easy. He was fond of his dignity, while he was perpetually degrading it by undue familiarity; capable of much public labour, yet often neglecting it for the meanest amusement; a wit, though a pedant; and a scholar, though fond of the conversation of the ignorant and uneducated. Even his timidity of temper was not uniform, and there were moments of his life, and those critical, in which he shewed the spirit of his ancestors. He was laborious in trifles, and a trifler when

serious labour was required; devout in his sentiments, and yet too often profane in his language; just and beneficent by nature, he yet gave way to the iniquities and oppression of others. He was penurious respecting money which he had to give from his own hand, yet inconsiderately and undoubtedly profuse of that which he did not see. In a word, those good qualities which displayed themselves in particular cases and occasions, were not of a nature sufficiently firm and comprehensive to regulate his general conduct; and, shewing themselves as they occasionally did, only entitled James to the character bestowed on him by Sully—that he was the wisest fool in Christendom.

"That the fortunes of this monarch might be as little of a piece as his character, he, certainly the least able of the Stuarts, succeeded peaceably to that kingdom, against the power of which his predecessors had, with so much difficulty, defended his native throne. And, lastly, although his reign appeared calculated to ensure to Great Britain that lasting tranquillity and internal peace which so much suited the King's disposition, yet, during that very reign, were sown those seeds of dissention, which, like the teeth of the fabulous dragon, had their harvest in a bloody and universal civil war.

"Such was the monarch, who, saluting Heriot familiarly by the name of Jingling Geordie, (for it was his well-known custom to give nick-names to all his familiars,) inquired what new clatter-traps he had brought with him, to cheat his lawful and native Prince out of his siller."

This clatter-trap is a piece of chased plate, and the colloquy proceeds:—

"'It was wrought, sir,' replied the goldsmith, 'by the famous Florentine, Benvenuto Cellini, and designed for Francis the First of France; but I hope it will find a fitter master.'

"'Francis of France!' said the King; 'send Solomon, King of the Jews, to Francis of France!—Body o' me, man, it would have kythed Cellini mad, had he never done ony thing else out of the gate. Francis!—why, he was a fighting fule, man—a mere fighting fule,—got himself ta'en at Pavia, like our ain David at Durham lang syne;—if they could hae sent him Solomon's wit, and love of peace and godliness, they wad hae dune him a better turn. But Solomon should sit in other gate company than Francis of France.'

"'I trust that such will be his good fortune,' said Heriot.'

"'It is a curious and vera artificial sculpture,' said the King, in continuation; 'but yet, methinks, the crucifix, or executioner there, is brandishing his gulley ower near the King's face, seeing he is within reach of his weapon. I think less wisdom than Solomon's wald have taught him that there was danger in edge-tools, and that he wald have bidded the smaik either sheath his shable, or stand farther back.'"

George Heriot endeavoured to alleviate this objection, by assuring the King that the vicinity betwixt Solomon and the executioner was nearer in appearance than in reality, and that the perspective should be allowed for.

"'Gang to the de'il wi' your prospective, man,' said the King; 'there canna be a waur prospective for a lawfu' king, wha wishes to reign in luve, and die in peace and honour, than to have naked swords flashing in his een. I am accounted as brave as maist folks; and yet I profess to ye I could never look on a bare blade without blinking and winking. But a' thegether it is a brave piece;—and what is the price of it, man?'

"The goldsmith replied by observing, that it was not his own property, but that of a distressed countryman.

"Whilk you mean to mak your excuse for asking the double of its worth, I warrant,' answered the King. 'I keen the tricks of you burrows-town merchants, man.'

"'I have no hopes of baffling your Majesty's sagacity,' said Heriot; 'the piece is really what I say, and the

price a hundred and fifty pounds sterling, if it pleases your Majesty to make present payment.'

"'A hundred and fifty pounds, man! and as mony witches and warlocks to raise them!' said the irritated monarch. 'My saul, Jingling Geordie, ye are minded that your purse shall jingle to a bonnie tune!—How am I to tell you down a hundred and fifty pounds for what will not weigh as many merks? and ye ken that my very household servitors, and the officers of my mouth, are sax months in arrear!'"

The goldsmith stood his ground against all this objurgation, as being what he was well accustomed to, and only answered, that, if his Majesty liked the piece, and desired to possess it, the price could be easily settled. It was true that the party could not want the money, but he, George Heriot, would advance it on his Majesty's account, if such were his pleasure, and wait his royal convenience for payment, for that and other matters; the money, meanwhile, lying at the ordinary usage.

Heriot takes an opportunity of pleading the cause of Nigel; for whom he obtains a present supply of money, and permission to plead his own cause at court.

To be continued.

THE CENSORS.

No. 3.

(Continued from No. 7.)

"The curious tresses of her curling hair,
As long and graceful still as e'er they were;
That same inimitable white or red,
Which o'er her face was so distinctly spread,
The roses and the lilies keep the plain,
Her sparkling eyes their lustre still retain,
And every feature still as justly grew."
Ovid, Elegy 3.

"It is by a man's countenance we form a premature judgment of his inward faculties and abilities. Before he opens his lips, we approve or condemn, according to our idea of the appearance of his physiognomy. These pre-judgments are confirmed or confuted only by longer acquaintance.

"The most striking and important feature in the face I scarcely need say is the eye: it is the index of the soul, where we look for what is written by the passions in the various pages of the mind,—the lightning of rage,—the fire of desire,—the warm glow of pure love is lighted up in this organ; the vacant glare of apathy, the sullen gloom of melancholy, and the raving horror of despair, are all depicted in it. The gleaming brilliancy of the fiery eye of the lunatic, lit by the torch of enthusiasm, rages in this feature; and the calm serenity of divine effulgence, beaming from that of the saint, originating from inspiration, brightens it into almost more than human splendour: add to this the 'Poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,' and the Lover's languishing with liquid softnesss, whilst mingled with the warm beams flowing from that of the partner of his passion, or darting with rapid radiance, piercing though sullen, in a dark paroxysm of jealousy, as he views with anguish a successful rival.

"It is the force and effect of these orbs of fire, even in representation, that exalts the art of painting above that of sculpture. The artist, in the latter science, has certainly the advantage of *reality embodying* his form, but it does not compensate for the loss he sustains in this particular. The rival sister can give, with a single touch of her *pencil*, that animation which the *chissel* never can produce. The "mould of form" is nothing to the fire of spirit. The sculptor has the one, the painter the other. It was for ancient Greece to produce fine works of sainary; let it be for modern Europe to create the excellences of painting: the one is an improvement on the other. But that it would be a diversion, perhaps not allowable, I could expatiate largely on this divine art. But here let me resume my subject.

"The eye of the body is as genius to the mind; it irradiates the other faculties, and gives life, animation,

and fire, to what else would appear dead, dull, and insipid. It calls into action our admiration of the other charms,—it lights them up. It is like a diamond in a golden casket, if it is absent the chief beauty is lost.

"The soul, to the intellectual faculties, is what the eye is to the material substance of the body. Taking such an exalted view of this organ, accounts for my giving it precedence, and treating of it so largely; and another reason is, that it is to *its* influence I owe all these observations; for had I not been blessed by Heaven with the wonderful power of vision, I could never have admired the beauteous form I am treating of—the master-piece of creation. But I now leave this interesting subject to pursue the remainder of my intention.

"The next feature to these in regular succession is the Nose, and this now claims my attention for another reason; it is, literally speaking, the most *prominent* feature in the face. That it is an ornament to the physiognomy no one will dispute; how much it is so remains for me to prove.

"The Romans, who, at the time I am speaking of, had arrived at a high state of refinement, it seems particularly admired noses, especially large ones; so much that we have an account of a cognomen being taken from a certain nobleman having a large one, I mean Ovid, to whom the appellation of Naso was applied. He even has called himself by that designation in the passage where he tells his reader in the "*Ars Amoris*," if he improves by the perusal of it he must acknowledge in these words—"*Naso magister erat.*"

The Roman nose of a warrior, the aquiline dignity of that of an empress, and the bewitching cock-up one of a little modern Venus, alike prove its consequence in various ways. We see in the models of Grecian antiquity fine noses cast in another mould, but they are equally beautiful in their kind. By this feature is expressed the dignity of a Senator, the perception of a Philosopher, and the lasciviousness of a Wanton. Greatness of soul, generosity, and all the fame-trumpeted virtues, are pourtrayed by it; but the reverse of these is still more remarkably visible in it: a little mind, a mean spirit, contempt, covetousness, and all the grovelling vices, plainly proclaim themselves by its means; but its beauty is not the less for its being, by the infirmities of human nature, sometimes perverted to deformity.

"Of how much importance persons who are *called* men of honour consider this member may be seen by their deeming it almost sacrilege to profane its sacred majesty with a rude touch. If their nose receives the embrace of another man's finger and thumb, that assault has a similar effect to applying a lighted match to the touch-hole of a cannon,—they ignite and explode in an instant. *Quere*: is the connection of these men's noses with the heart or with the mind? Were I to give an answer, I should say with neither, but that it was with the *vapours* of the brain, which, like foul gas in an empty cavern, goes off when a light is applied to it. If I were to go on for a week in this strain, it is not by these coxcombs I should be able to establish the worth of it; let us then leave them and their contemptible conceits.

"The simple beauty of the nose of a little roguish gypsy is enough even to interest one's heart for a moment. I know not whether the celebrated queen of the ancient gypsies (or rather Egyptians) had such an one; even if she had, how much more may we be delighted with the alabaster loveliness and exquisite form of that of an European beauty.

"But the value of the nasal ornament may be better appreciated by a contrast with the horror of its being lost. Not Venus herself would appear to have any charms in her countenance if this organ were wanting; yet how often has the cruel Queen of Beauty bereft her votaries of this admirable ornament. If that magnificent building St. Paul's Cathedral were to take its flight, and dissolve into air like "the baseless fabric of a vi-

sion," the loss of the grandeur of the city would not be so great as the removal of the nasal ornament from the face. Comparatively and figuratively speaking, the one would only be the flight of a *wren* from the aviary of beauty, the other the departure of a stately eagle.

"The next most remarkable charm of the face is the Mouth, around which the smiling cupids play. The pearl-like hue of the teeth, whose brilliant whiteness, giving peculiar expression to this part of the face, enhances the beauty of the ruby sweetness of the lips. In the expressive language of love, the mouth claims the next place to the eyes. Lovers cry,

'Tis when our lips move, yet have nothing to say!
And our eyes in each other's warm beams fade away.'

"The calm softness of the lips, their pouting ripeness, and their brilliant colour, excite our admiration and delight. How interesting is the heavenly calmness, the bewitching simper, and the entrancing smile? Ask the inamorato;—but if you were worthy of beholding them, you must already have felt the force of them yourself. The transcendent excellence of their charms claim a salutation from kindred beauties; lips ask for "the dear encounter" of lips to greet them. Nature has given us a hint for this by placing the two velvet corals so that they are almost eternally kissing each other. This tells us their destination. It is impossible for me to describe the delicious rapture of the paradised compact,—expressions retire, conscious of their own incapacity.

'Oh heaven of love, thou moment of delight!
Wrong'd by my words, my fancy does thee right.'

"These various charms of the countenance are with super-human taste adorned.

"The plump Cheeks swelled with an elegant rotundity are beautified with the roseate bloom of health. Others may have compared this to the brilliant blush of some fruit or flower; but I affirm that the lovely hue of the cheek of beauty can be compared to nothing on Earth, without their losing by the comparison.

"The fat Chin, graced by a dimple, (lest it shouldenvy the cheeks, which have a laughing one in each,) finishes this part of the contour.

"Beautiful little Ears ornament the sides of the head, and the graceful ringlets over-hanging the summit, gives force and effect to the virgin whiteness of the Forehead by the curious shade they place in contrast with it.

"Let me sum up the whole of the physiognomy of the human form with a metaphor:—the countenance is a splendid court, over which the Eye reigns on the throne of sovereignty. The rest of the features are its prime ministers, amongst which the Mouth is the grand vizier; and the servile offices of this kingdom of the graces are performed by the arms, legs, hands, feet, &c., as lesser magistrates of the imperial kingdom.

To be continued.

THE ROOKERY.

[From Bracebridge Hall.]

In a grove of tall oaks and beeches, that crowns a terrace walk, just on the skirts of the garden, is an ancient rookery, which is one of the most important provinces in the squire's rural domain. The old gentleman sets great store by his rooks, and will not suffer one of them to be killed; in consequence of which they have increased amazingly; the tree-tops are loaded with their nests; they have encroached upon the great avenue, and have even established, in times long past, a colony among the elms and pines of the church-yard, which, like other distant colonies, has already thrown off allegiance to the mother-country.

The rooks are looked upon by the squire as a very ancient and honourable line of gentry, highly aristocratical in their notions, fond of place, and attached to church and state; as their building so loftily, keeping about

churches and cathedrals, and in the venerable groves of old castles and manor-houses, sufficiently manifests. The good opinion thus expressed by the squire put me upon observing more narrowly these very respectable birds; for I confess, to my shame, I had been apt to confound them with their cousins-german the crows, to whom, at the first glance, they bear so great a family resemblance. Nothing, it seems, could be more unjust or injurious than such a mistake. The rooks and crows are, among the feathered tribes, what the Spaniards and Portuguese are among nations, the least loving, in consequence of their neighbourhood and similarity. The rooks are old-established housekeepers, high-minded gentlefolk, that have had their hereditary abodes time out of mind; but as to the poor crows, they are a kind of vagabond, predatory, gipsy race, roving about the country without any settled home; "their hands are against every body, and every body's against them," and they are gibbeted in every corn-field. Master Simon assures me that a female rook, that should so far forget herself, as to consort with a crow, would inevitably be disinherited, and indeed would be totally discarded by all her genteel acquaintance.

The squire is very watchful over the interests and concerns of his sable neighbours. As to Master Simon he even pretends to know many of them by sight, and to have given names to them; he points out several, which he says are old heads of families, and compares them to worthy old citizens, before hand in the world, that wear cocked-hats, and silver buckles in their shoes. Notwithstanding the protecting benevolence of the squire, and their being residents in his empire, they seem to acknowledge no allegiance, and to hold no intercourse or intimacy. Their airy tenements are built almost out of the reach of gunshot; and, notwithstanding their vicinity to the Hall, they maintain a most reserved and distrustful shyness of mankind.

There is one season of the year, however, which brings all birds in a manner to a level, and tames the pride of the loftiest highflyer; which is the season of building their nests. This takes place early in the spring, when the forest-trees first begin to show their buds; the long, withy ends of the branches to turn green; when the wild strawberry, and other herbage of the sheltered woodlands, put forth their tender and tinted leaves; and the daisy and the primrose peep from under the hedges. At this time there is a general bustle among the feathered tribes; an incessant fluttering about, and a cheerful chirping; indicative, like the germination of the vegetable world, of the reviving life and fecundity of the year.

It is then that the rooks forget their usual stateliness, and their shy and lofty habits. Instead of keeping up in the high regions of the air, swinging on the breezy tree-tops, and looking down with sovereign contempt upon the humble crawlers upon earth, they are fain to throw off for a time the dignity of the gentleman, to come down to the ground, and put on the painstaking and industrious character of a labourer. They now lose their natural shyness, become fearless and familiar, and may be seen plying about in all directions, with an air of great assiduity, in search of building materials. Every now and then your path will be crossed by one of these busy old gentlemen, worrying about with awkward gait, as if troubled with the gout, or with corns on his toes, casting about many a prying look, turning down first one eye, then the other in earnest consideration, upon every straw he meets with, until, espying some mighty twig, large enough to make a rafter for his air-castle, he will seize upon it with avidity, and hurry away with it to the tree-top; fearing, apparently, lest you should dispute with him the invaluable prize.

Like other castle-builders, these airy architects seem rather fanciful in the materials with which they build, and to like those most which

come from a distance. Thus' though there are abundance of dry twigs on the surrounding trees, yet they never think of making use of them, but go foraging in distant lands, and come sailing home, one by one, from the ends of the earth, each bearing in his bill some precious piece of timber.

Nor must I avoid mentioning what, I grieve to say, rather derogates from the grave and honourable character of these ancient gentlefolk, that, during the architectural season, they are subject to great dissensions among themselves; that they make no scruple to defraud and plunder each other; and that sometimes the rookery is a scene of hideous brawl and commotion, in consequence of some delinquency of the kind. One of the partners generally remains on the nest to guard it from depredation; and I have seen severe contests, when some sly neighbour has endeavoured to filch away a tempting rafter that had captivated his eye. As I am not willing to admit any suspicion hastily that should throw a stigma on the general character of so worshipful a people, I am inclined to think that these larcenies are very much discountenanced by the higher classes and even rigorously punished by those in authority; for I have now and then seen a whole gang of rooks fall upon the nest of some individual, pull it all to pieces, carry off the spoils, and even buffet the luckless proprietor. I have concluded this to be some signal punishment inflicted upon him, by the officers of the police, for some pilfering misdemeanor; or, perhaps, that it was a crew of bailiffs carrying an execution into his house.

I have been amused with another of their movements during the building season. The steward has suffered a considerable number of sheep to graze on a lawn near the house, somewhat to the annoyance of the squire, who thinks this an innovation on the dignity of a park, which ought to be devoted to deer only. Be this as it may, there is a green knoll, not far from the drawing-room window, where the ewes and lambs are accustomed to assemble towards evening, for the benefit of the setting sun. No sooner were they gathered here, at the time when these politic birds were building, than a stately old rook, who Master Simon assured me was the chief magistrate of this community, would settle down upon the head of one of the ewes, who, seeming conscious of this condescension, would desist from grazing, and stand fixed in motionless reverence of her august burthen; the rest of the rookery would then come wheeling down in imitation of their leader, until every ewe had two or three of them cawing, and fluttering, and battling upon her back. Whether they requited the submission of the sheep, by levying a contribution upon their fleece for the benefit of the rookery, I am not certain; though I presume they followed the usual custom of protecting powers.

The latter part of May is the time of great tribulation among the rookeries, when the young are just able to leave the nests, and balance themselves on the neighbouring branches. Now comes on the season of "rook shooting;" a terrible slaughter of the innocents. The squire, of course, prohibits all invasion of the kind on his territories; but I am told that a lamentable havoc takes place in the colony about the old church. Upon this devoted commonwealth the village charges "with all its chivalry." Every idle wight that is lucky enough to possess an old gun or blunderbuss, together with all the archery of Slingsby's school, take the field on the occasion. In vain does the little parson interfere, or remonstrate, in angry tones, from his study window that looks into the church-yard; there is a continual popping from morning till night. Being no great marksmen, their shots are not often effective; but every now and then a shout from the besieging army of bumpkins makes known the downfal of some unlucky, squab rook, which comes to the ground with the emphasis of a squashed apple-dumpling.

Nor is the rookery entirely free from other troubles and disasters. In so aristocratical and lofty-minded a

community, which boasts so much ancient blood and hereditary pride, it is natural to suppose that questions of etiquette will sometimes arise, and affairs of honour ensue. In fact, this is very often the case; bitter quarrels break out between individuals, which produce sad scufflings on the tree-tops, and I have more than once seen a regular duel take place between two doughty heroes of the rookery. Their field of battle is generally the air; and their contest is managed in the most scientific and elegant manner; wheeling round and round each other, and towering higher and higher to get the 'vantage ground, until they sometimes disappear in the clouds before the combat is determined.

They have also fierce combats now and then with the invading hawk, and will drive him off from their territories by a *posse comitatis*. They are also extremely tenacious of their domains, and will suffer no other bird to inhabit the grove or its vicinity. There was a very ancient and respectable old bachelor owl that had long had his lodgings in a corner of the grove, but has been fairly ejected by the rooks, and has retired, disgusted with the world, to a neighbouring wood, where he leads the life of a hermit, and makes nightly complaints of his ill treatment.

The hootings of this unhappy gentleman may generally be heard in the still evenings when the rooks are all at rest; and I have often listened to them of a moonlight night, with a kind of mysterious gratification. This gray-hearded misanthrope of course is highly respected by the squire; and the servants have superstitious notions about him; and it would be difficult to get the dairy-maid to venture after dark near to the wood which he inhabits.

Beside the private quarrels of the rooks, there are other misfortunes to which they are liable, and which often bring distress into the most respectable families of the rookery. Having the true baronial spirit of the good old feudal times, they are apt now and then to issue forth from their castles on a foray, and to lay the plebeian fields of the neighbouring country under contribution; in the course of which chivalrous expeditions they now and then get a shot from the rusty artillery of some refractory farmer. Occasionally, too, while they are quietly taking the air beyond the park boundaries, they have the incaution to come within the reach of the truant bowmen of Slingsby's school, and receive a flight shot from some unlucky urchin's arrow. In such case the wounded adventurer will sometimes have just strength enough to bring himself home, and giving up the ghost at the rookery, will hang dangling "all abroad" on a bough, like a thief on a gibbet; an awful warning to his friends, and an object of great commiseration to the squire!

But maugre all these untoward incidents, the rooks have, upon the whole, a happy holiday life of it. When their young are reared and fairly launched upon their native element the air, the care of the old folks seem over, and they resume all their aristocratical dignity and idleness. I have envied them the enjoyments which they appear to have in their ethereal heights, sporting with clamorous exultation about their lofty bowers; sometimes hovering over them, sometimes partially alighting upon the topmost branches, and there balancing with out-stretched wings, and swinging in the breeze. Sometimes they seem to take a fashionable drive to the church, and amuse themselves by circling in airy rings about its spire; at other times a mere garrison is left at home to mount guard in their strong hold at the grove, while the rest roam abroad to enjoy the fine weather. About sunset the garrison gives notice of their return; their faint cawing will be heard from a great distance, and they will be seen far off like a sable cloud, and then nearer and nearer, until they all come soaring home. Then they perform several grand circuits in the air, over the hall and garden, wheeling closer and

closer, until they gradually settle down upon the grove, when a prodigious cawing takes place, as though they were relating their day's adventures.

I like at such times to walk about these dusky groves, and hear the various sounds of these airy people roosted so high above me. As the gloom increases, their conversation subsides, and they seem to be gradually dropping asleep; but every now and then there is a querulous note as if some one was quarreling for a pillow, or a little more of the blanket. It is late in the evening before they completely sink to repose, and then their old anchorite neighbour, the owl, begins his lonely hootings from his bachelor's hall, in the wood.

CORPULENCY.

Among the letters published in M'Kenzie's "Life of Home," is a playful one from David Hume to Mrs. Dysart, which is highly worthy the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer:—

"My compliments to his Solicitorship. Unfortunately I have not a horse at present to carry my fat carcase, to pay its respects to his superior obesity. But if he finds travelling requisite either for his health or the Captain's, we shall be glad to entertain him here as long as we can do it at another's expence; in hopes we shall soon be able to do it at our own.

"Pray tell the Solicitor that I have been reading lately, in an old author called *Strabo*, that in some cities of ancient Gaul, there was a fixed legal standard, established for corpulency, and that the senate kept a measure, beyond which, if any belly presumed to increase, the proprietor of that belly was obliged to pay a fine to the public, proportionable to its rotundity. Ill would it fare with his worship and I, [me] if such a law should pass our parliament; for I am afraid we are already got beyond the statute.

"I wonder, indeed, no harpy of the treasury has ever thought of this method of raising money. Taxes on luxury are always most approved of; and no one will say, that the carrying about a portly belly is of any use or necessity. 'Tis a mere superfluous ornament, and is a proof too, that its proprietor enjoys greater plenty than he puts to a good use; and, therefore, 'tis fit to reduce him to a level with his fellow subjects, by taxes and impositions.

"As the lean people are the most active, unquiet, and ambitious, they every where govern the world, and may certainly oppress their antagonists whenever they please. Heaven forbid that Whig and Tory should ever be abolished, for then the nation might be split into fat and lean, and our faction, I am afraid, would be in piteous taking. The only comfort is, if they oppressed us very much, we should at last change sides with them.

"Besides, who knows if a tax were imposed on fatness, but some jealous divine might pretend that the church was in danger.

"I cannot but bless the memory of Julius Cæsar, for the great esteem he expressed for fat men, and his aversion to lean ones. All the world allows, that that emperor was the greatest genius that ever was, and the greatest judge of mankind.

"But I should ask your pardon, dear Madam, for this long dissertation on fatness and leanness, in which you are no way concerned; for you are neither fat nor lean, and may indeed be denominated an arrant trimmer. But this letter may all be read to the Solicitor; for it contains nothing that need be a secret to him. On the contrary, I hope he will profit by the example; and, were I near him, I should endeavour to prove as good an encourager as in this other instance. What can the man be afraid of? The Mayor of London had more courage who defied the hare."

SPRING.

At this season the pleasures of the town appear to me to be very happily pourtrayed in the mock festival

on May day, in which the unfortunate race of beings, called chimney sweepers, perform so conspicuous a part; and in which the union of glitter and dirt, merriment and misery, aptly shew the wretched incongruity of Spring in London. Nothing on earth can be so widely different as the town and country notions of Spring. Let us briefly consider a London young lady's ideas of that season. In the middle of April she begins to perceive an unusual stir around her, as though life had, from some cause, received a new impulse; she sees a prodigious increase of carriages in the streets, of visitors in mamma's drawing-room, a great influx of beaux and belles in the Park—the shops present a lively display of every bright and attractive colour, and *sweet* silk, and *sweet* gauzes, reappear, which have lain dormant during the winter. Once a week or so, as the weather is remarkably fine, she and a train of younger brothers and sisters are conveyed in mamma's carriage to Kensington Gardens: after a long morning's shopping, they alight, and a little prim procession of masters and misses demurely walk forth hand in hand, the former in dresses with shining buttons, fenced round with stiffly-plaited frills, which preserve the strictest composure during the walk; the latter in nice white frocks, with furbelows round the ankles and borders of the garments, kid slippers and gloves, and each a silk parasol and veil. The eldest demoiselle takes mamma's arm, and if she be not much fatigued with the labours of the morning, the young lady has the benefit of a detail of her bargains. She remarks to her mother that Spring is certainly come, she notices that jonquil, and even primrose colours, are worn already by several of the fashionables in the Gardens. If any of the little ones are attracted by the sight of the trees or flowers, and is inquisitive of its attendant nurse, "Don't point, Master Henry—go on, Miss Harriett—pray, put down that nasty weed; your mamma don't like you to point or to stand still, and you will quite spoil your gloves."—After a few turns they re-enter the carriage in complete order, and all agree, looking at their slippers, that Spring is the most charming of seasons. Then come panoramas, and exhibitions, and sweet landscapes; such faithful representations of rural scenery! Inimitable Glover! so true to nature! Then such sweet fashions—so new—so charming—dear Burlington Arcade is surely the Arcadia that the poets dreamed of! Such crowds of equipage in the Park the first Sunday in May—the movement so slow—and time so ample for reconnoitring the tenants of each carriage *en passant*—what variety! and what innumerable ideas gleaned even on a Sunday, (when no shopping can be done) for the important science of dress. And then the delightful multiplicity of engagements, dinners, routs, balls, &c. &c. &c., the meeting with hundreds of dear affectionate friends, the noise, bustle, and fermentation of spirits—oh, there is nothing can equal London in Spring!

The scene, if you please, gentle reader, changes to my study in the country—the door of which is clamorously besieged early before breakfast by a troop of chubby-faced youngsters, each laden with some article of wonder from Nature's repository; and a long tale to tell during the repast of what has occurred in the course of the walk. "Oh, Papa, do you know we have found the wren's nest which you looked for yesterday—but we did not touch it, and I called Ellen away, for I saw the hen-bird watching."—"Yes, Papa, and there are daffodils and cowslips quite out in blossom, and here's a nosegay I have brought for you and mamma; and I want you to tell me what this is, and this, &c. &c."—In the afternoon, when school is happily over, and they are out again, Laura bursts into the room, open-mouthed, her hat flying, and her eye sparkling with animation, to announce to her mamma the arrival of the first butterfly seen that season! Never did such delight brighten the countenance of her cousin in London, even at the sight of a coronetted coach stopping at the door. In the evening the young people may

be seen issuing forth a joyous train, busily engaging in the labours of the several gardens appropriated to each, simply clad, unencumbered with gloves, and their frocks perhaps ornamented with a fringe of good garden mould—which with us is considered neither calamity nor crime; and is amply compensated by the first early sallad produced by the young horticulturists. On a May-day, when it has been such as poets love to paint, what a group have I seen carrying the Garland, and how I have followed the steps of their airy dance, with emotions of pleasure, far, far superior to what they themselves felt, or I could have experienced at their age!

Nor is our life so unchequered by events as the gay beings of the town are pleased to imagine. The various changes and additions to the several members of our society are no less interesting, and make quite as much noise with us as the same events in the great metropolis of fashion. We have not to complain of monotony—far from it—and to convince our readers, we will favour them with an extract from

The Rural Chronicle, April, 1822.

Departures.—For the north; —— Frost, Esq. and suite, amongst whom we noticed Messrs. Woodcock, Fieldfare, Redwing, &c. &c. &c.

Arrivals.—Early in the month, Mr. and Mrs. Swallow; family expected to follow soon.—N. B. Mr. and Mrs. S. go out very little as yet.

The Messrs. Blackbird and Thrush have begun to give their annual concerts for the season.

Their respective ladies are "at home."

The musical foreigner of distinction—the Signor Cuckoo—whose favourite cantatas are so repeatedly encored—he is said to be on the look-out for lodgings in the neighbourhood.—Strange stories are in circulation respecting a branch of the *Sparrow* family.

The Widow Nightingale—to her seat in Poplar island.

The Miss Martens for the season.

Dr. and Mrs. Rook have made great progress in their new dwelling, which is built on the old site.

The Wren family, so famous in the annals of architecture, have lately designed some edifices, which shew them to be as skilful as ever in that admirable art.

Court News.—Gazette Extraordinary.—Yesterday, her serene highness, Queen Flora, held her first drawing-room this season, which was most numerously attended. The court opened soon after sunrise. Mr. Skylark was in waiting to announce the company.

The Misses Daisy were the earliest visitors, after which arrivals were constant.

Messrs. Bugle, Broom, Lilac, Orchis, Periwinkle, Ranunculus, Stellaria, &c. &c., all richly and tastefully attired.

The numerous family of the Anemones paid their devoirs early—these *elegantes* were variously habited. Some wore rich scarlet bodices, others purple and green train. The Misses A., in robes of simple white and green, almost surpassed in beauty their more splendid relatives.

The Misses Violet—on their return to the country—introduced by the Ladies Primrose. The amiable and modest appearance of the former was much noticed—the costume of each party was thought very becoming and skilfully assorted to set off the colours and charms of each.

The Misses Blue Bell, robes of azure tissue, much admired for the sylph-like elegance of their forms.

The beautiful Germander family, with their never-to-be-forgotten eyes of heavenly blue, attracted universal attention.

The arrival of the Rose family was anxiously expected.

The Misses Cowslip were presented—it has been the fashion to call them the "pretty rustics;" but they were most graciously received, and the delicate propriety of their dress and manners much admired.

The Lady Cardamines—costumes of the finest *linen*. The simplicity of this novel style of dress was thought very bewitching.

Mrs. Tulip—body and train of crim-

son and gold. This truly grand dress had a superb effect.

Messrs. Chesnut, Oak, Birch, Lime, &c. &c. sported new bright green liveries.

Messrs. Blackthorn, Pear, Apple, &c.&c. crowded round their sovereign, eager to pay their dutiful homage: they made a magnificent show, in rich suits of white, red, and green.

The company were greatly delighted with a concert of vocal music from a large party of the best performers in the neighbourhood, consisting wholly of amateurs.

In this belle assemblée it has been whispered that radical principles had been very generally disseminated, though studiously kept out of sight.

The good order and obedience to the laws of their Queen, for which the attendants on this court are remarkable, is the best refutation of every calumny. We are happy to add, that though in so large and mixed an assembly, many individuals must have been unavoidably thrown in the shade, yet no umbrage was taken, and the evening concluded with the utmost harmony, the parties continuing together till the shadows of the evening; when, having partaken of a few drops of a light and charming beverage, (the receipt for which is not to be found in Mrs. Rundell), the court broke up; but not before widow Nightingale (who had joined the performers of the morning) had been entreated to favour the company with a song—that well-bred lady instantly complied, and poured upon the ears of her delighted auditors one of her most heart-thrilling melodies.

EXTRACTS FROM AN UNPUBLISHED WORK, ENTITLED "A VOICE FROM ST. HELENA."

"NAPOLEON's hours of rest were uncertain, much depending upon the quantum of rest he had enjoyed during the night. He was in general a bad sleeper, and frequently got up at three or four o'clock, in which case he read or wrote until six or seven, at which time, when the weather was fine, he sometimes went out to ride, attended by some of his generals, or laid down again to rest for a couple of hours. When he retired to bed, he could not sleep unless the most perfect state of darkness was obtained, by the closure of every cranny through which a ray of light might pass, although I have sometimes seen him fall asleep on the sofa, and remain so for a few minutes in broad daylight. When ill, Marchand occasionally read to him until he fell asleep. At times he rose at seven, and wrote or dictated until breakfast time, or, if the morning was very fine, he went out to ride. When he breakfasted in his own room, it was generally served on a little round table, at between nine and ten; when along with the rest of his suite, at eleven; in either case *à la fourchette*. After breakfast, he generally dictated to some of his suite for a few hours, and at two or three o'clock received such visitors as by previous appointment had been directed to present themselves. Between four and five, when the weather permitted, he rode out on horseback or in the carriage, accompanied by all his suite, for an hour or two; then returned and dictated or read until eight, or occasionally played a game at chess, at which time dinner was announced, which rarely exceeded twenty minutes or half an hour in duration. He ate heartily and fast, and did not appear to be partial to high seasoned or rich food. One of his most favourite dishes was a roasted leg of mutton, of which I have seen him pare the outside brown part off; he was also partial to mutton chops. He rarely drank as much as a pint of claret at his dinner, which was generally much diluted with water. After dinner, when the servants had withdrawn, and when there were no visitors, he sometimes played at chess or at whist, but more frequently sent for a volume of Corneille, or of some other esteemed author, and read aloud for an hour, or chatted with the ladies and the rest of his suite. He usually retired to his bed-room at ten or eleven, and to rest immediately af-

terwards. When he breakfasted or dined in his apartment (*dans l'intérieur*), he sometimes sent for one of his suite to converse with during the repast. He never ate more than two meals a day, nor, since I knew him, had he ever taken more than a very small cup of coffee after each repast, and at no other time. I have also been informed, by those who have been in his service for fifteen years, that he had never exceeded that quantity since they first knew him."

* * * *

"Napoleon's bed-room was about fourteen feet by twelve, and ten or twelve feet in height. The walls were lined with brown nankeen, bordered and edged with common green bordering paper, and destitute of surbase. Two small windows, without pullies, looked towards the camp of the 53d regiment, one of which was thrown up and fastened by a piece of notched wood. Window-curtains of white long cloth, a small fire-place, a shabby grate, and fire-irons to match, with a paltry mantel-piece of wood, painted white, upon which stood a small marble bust of his son. Above the mantel-piece hung the portrait of Marie Louise, and four or five of young Napoleon, one of which was embroidered by the hands of the mother. A little more to the right hung also a miniature picture of the Empress Josephine, and to the left was suspended the alarm chamber-watch of Frederic the Great, obtained by Napoleon at Potsdam; while on the right, the consular watch, engraved with the cypher B, hung by a chain of the plaited hair of Marie Louise, from a pin stuck in the nankeen lining. The floor was covered with a second hand carpet, which had once decorated the dining-room of a lieutenant of the St. Helena artillery. In the right-hand corner was placed the little plain iron camp bedstead, with green silk curtains, upon which its master had reposed on the fields of Marengo and Austerlitz. Between the windows there was a paltry second-hand chest of drawers; and an old book case with green blinds stood to the left of the door leading to the next apartment. Four or five cane-bottomed chairs, painted green, were standing here and there about the room. Before the back-door, there was a screen covered with nankeen, and between that and the fire-place, an old fashioned sofa covered with white long cloth, upon which reclined Napoleon, clothed in his white morning gown, white loose trowsers and stockings all in one. A chequered red madras upon his head, and his shirt-collar open without a cravat. His air was melancholy and troubled. Before him stood a little round table, with some books, at the foot of which lay, in confusion upon the carpet, a heap of those which he had already perused, and at the foot of the sofa facing him was suspended a portrait of the Empress Marie Louise, with her son in her arms. In front of the fire-place stood Las Cases, with his arms folded over his breast, and some papers in one of his hands. Of all the former magnificence of the once mighty emperor of France, nothing was present except a superb wash-hand-stand, containing a silver basin and water-jug, of the same metal, in the left hand corner."

* * * *

"Napoleon showed me the marks of two wounds, one a very deep cicatrice above the left knee, which he said he had received in his first campaign of Italy, and it was of so serious a nature, that the surgeons were in doubt whether it might not be ultimately necessary to amputate. He observed, that when he was wounded, it was always kept a secret, in order not to discourage the soldiers. The other was on the toe, and had been received at Eckmuhl. "At the siege of Acre," continued he, "a shell thrown by Sydney Smith fell at my feet. Two soldiers, who were close by, seized, and closely embraced me, one in front and the other on one side, and made a rampart of their bodies for me against the effect of the shell, which exploded, and overwhelmed us with sand. We sunk into the hole formed by its bursting; one of them was wounded, I made them both officers. One has since lost a leg at Mos-

row, and commanded at Vincennes when I left Paris. When he was summoned by the Prussians, he replied, that as soon as they sent him back the leg that he had lost at Moscow, he would surrender the fortress. 'Many times in my life,' continued he, 'have I been saved by soldiers and officers throwing themselves before me when I was in the most imminent danger. At Arcola, when I was advancing, Colonel Meuron, my aid-de-camp, threw himself before me, covered me with his body, and received the wound which was destined for me. He fell at my feet, and his blood spouted up in my face. He gave his life to preserve mine. Never yet, I believe, has there been such devotion shown by soldiers as mine have manifested for me. In all my misfortunes, never has the soldier, even when expiring, been wanting to me—never has man been served more faithfully by his troops. With the last drop of blood gushing out of their veins, they exclaimed, *Vive l'Empereur!*'"

* * * *

"In the battle before Dresden, I ordered an attack to be made upon the allies by both flanks of my army. While the manœuvres for this purpose were executing, the centre remained motionless. At the distance of about from this to the outer gate, I observed a group of persons collected together on horseback. Concluding that they were endeavouring to observe my manœuvres, I resolved to disturb them, and called a captain of artillery, who commanded a field battery of eighteen or twenty pieces: '*Mettez une douzaine des boulets à la fois dans ce groupe là, peut-être il y a quelques petits généraux.*' Throw a dozen of bullets at once into that group; perhaps there are some little generals in it.' It was done instantly. One of the balls struck Moreau, carried off both his legs, and went through his horse. Many more, I believe, who were near him, were killed and wounded. A moment before Alexander had been speaking to him. Moreau's legs were amputated not far from the spot. One of his feet, with the boot upon it, which the surgeon had thrown upon the ground, was brought by a peasant to the king of Saxony, with information that some officer of great distinction had been struck by a cannon shot. The king, conceiving that the name of the person might be discovered by the boot, sent it to me. It was examined at my head-quarters, but all that could be ascertained was, that the boot was neither of English nor of French manufacture. The next day we were informed that it was the leg of Moreau. It is not a little extraordinary,' continued Napoleon 'that in an action a short time afterwards, I ordered the same artillery officer, with the same guns, and under nearly similar circumstances, to throw eighteen or twenty bullets at once into a concourse of officers collected together, by which General St. Priest, another Frenchman, a traitor and a man of talent, who had a command in the Russian army, was killed, along with many others. Nothing,' continued the Emperor, 'is more destructive than a discharge of a dozen or more guns at once amongst a group of persons. From one or two they may escape; but from a number discharged at a time, it is almost impossible. After Essling, when I had caused my army to go over to the isle of Lobau, there was for some weeks, by common and tacit consent on both sides between the soldiers, not by any agreement between the generals, a cessation of firing, which indeed had produced no benefit, and only killed a few unfortunate sentinels. I rode out every day in different directions. No person was molested on either side. One day, however, riding along with Oudinot, I stopped for a moment upon the edge of the island, which was about eighty toises distant from the opposite bank, where the enemy was. They perceived us, and knowing me by the little hat and grey coat, they pointed a three-pounder at us. The ball passed between Oudinot and me, and was very close to both of us. We put spurs to our horses, and speedily got out of sight. Under the actual circumstances, the attack was little better than murder, but if they had fired a dozen guns at once they must have killed us.'"

POETRY.

THE SERENE EVENING.

(From the Spanish.)

I GAZE upon yon orbs of light—
The countless stars that gem the sky;
Each in its sphere serenely bright
Wheeling its course—how silently!
While in the mantle of the night
Earth and its cares and troubles lie.

Temple of light and loveliness,
And thrones of grandeur, can it be
That souls, whose kindred loftiness
Nature hath framed to rise to thee,
Should pine within this narrow space,
This prison of mortality?

What madness from the path of right
For ever leads our steps astray,
That reckless of thy pure delight,
We turn from this divine array,
To chase a shade that mocks the sight—
A good that vanisheth away?

Awake, ye mortals! raise your eyes
To these eternal starry spheres;
Look on these glories of the skies,
And see how poor this world appears,
With all its pomps and vanities—
With all its hopes and all its fears.

Who can look forth upon this blaze
Of heavenly lamps, so brightly shining,
Through the unbounded void of space—
A hand unseen their course assigning,
All moving with unequal pace,
Yet in harmonious concord joining.

Who sees the silver chariot move
Of the bright Moon; and, gliding slow,
The star whose influence from above
Sheds knowledge on the world below;
And the resplendent Queen of Love
All bright and beautifully glow?—

Or, where the angry God of War
Rolls fiercely on his bloody way,
And near the mild majestic star
That o'er the Gods of old held sway;
That beams his radiance from afar,
And calms the heavens beneath his ray.

Where Saturn shews his distant beam,
God of the golden days of yore;
Or where the countless stars that seem
Thick as the sand upon the shore,
From their eternal seats a stream
Of glory and of radiance pour.

Who that hath seen these splendours roll,
And gazed on this majestic scene,
But sigh'd to 'scape this world's controul,
Spurning its pleasures poor and mean,
To burst the bonds that bind the soul,
And pass the gulf that yawn'd between?

THE KEEPSAKE.

Oh, knowest thou! why, to distance driven
When friendship meets the parting hour,
The simplest things that moment given
Long, long retain a magic power?

Why still, whene'er they meet the view,
They can the thefts of Time retrieve,
The scenes of former bliss renew,
And bid each dear idea live?

It boots not, if the pencilled rose,
Or severed ringlet meets the eye,
Or India's polished gem inclose
The talisman of sympathy.

Keet it—yes, keep it for my sake—
On Fancy's ear still peals the sound;
Nor time the potent charm can break,
Or loose the spell by nature bound.

Y. B.

FORGET THEE? NO.

FORGET thee? When this heart is dead,
When life with all its joy hath fled;
When Memory's gone, and friendship's o'er,
And kindred throbs shall beat no more,
Then—not 'till then—so grief forego—
Can I forget thee?—no—ah! no.

Forget thee? When the rose to blow
When vernal suns forget to glow,
When flowers no more their fragrance bring,
Nor wild birds charms the breathing spring,
Then—not 'till then—so grief forego—
Can I forget thee?—no—ah! no.

Y. B.